

licences renewed due to the departmental rule. As such, the opium growers need to be provided suitable relief. Their licences should also be renewed. The losses were to be assessed after making physical inspection of the crops, however, that too was not done.

This matter not only relates to the interests of the thousands of farmers, it also relates to foreign exchange earnings. I, therefore, request Hon. Finance Minister to issue immediately suitable instructions to the deptt. to compensate the farmers in this regard.

**(ii) Need to open six computer reservation counters at Meerut City Railway Station, UP**

SHRI AMAR PAL SINGH (Meerut) : Mr Speaker, Sir. Only three computerised reservation centres are functioning at present at Meerut City railway station. Meerut is a big trade and industrial centre and has a big cantonment area. In the absence of an Enquiry office at the Railway station people have to wait for hours together in hope of getting a confirmed ticket only to be told that no reservation was available in so and so train. As such people, particularly the army personnel have to face a lot of difficulties. About 1500 reservation are made at this station daily.

I, therefore, request hon. Minister of Railways to grant permission to open three more computerised reservation counters in addition to the existing three; for VIP's women and disabled persons and general public and an enquiry office should also be opened. It should be ensured that they start functioning as early as possible.

**(iii) Need to provide adequate funds to State Government of Madhya Pradesh for providing relief to the people whose crops have been affected by heavy rains and hailstorms in all districts of the State including Bilaspur.**

SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE : (Bilaspur) Mr. Speaker, Sir. Kharif and Rabi crops of farmers have been completely destroyed due to heavy rains and hailstorms in all districts of Madhya Pradesh including district Bilaspur during the period from November 1997 to January-February 1998. The State Government has already conducted survey in this regard but so far no assistance has been given to the farmers and labourers. There is an urgent need to take up relief work and provide compensation amount to the farmers for the loss of their crops.

Hence, I request the Union Government to sanction assistance of Rs. 100 crores to Madhya Pradesh for providing compensation and taking relief measures to help the affected farmers.

**(iv) Need to set up Central Schools in Bilaspur and Una districts of Himachal Pradesh**

SHRI SURESH CHANDEL (Hamirpur) (H.P.) : Mr Speaker, Sir, Defence Personnel, Ex-servicemen and employees working under Central Government live in large number in my parliamentary constituency Hamirpur, Bilaspur and Una districts of Himachal Pradesh but no Central Schools had been set up in these two districts so far because of which employees are facing great difficulties in the matter of education of their wards.

Himachal Pradesh is a border, hilly and backward state. Therefore, I request that one Central School should be opened at district headquarters Bilaspur and also at Una District headquarter on priority basis by making provision for adequate funds for this purpose in the financial budget, 1998-99, so as to make adequate arrangements for the education of children of Defence Personnel and Central Government employees living in these districts.

**(v) Need to take adequate safety measures by detailing Expert team to monitor the fallout of nuclear blasts and to give special financial package to people of Pokharan of Jaisalmer district**

[English]

COL. SONA RAM CHOUDHARY (Barmer) : Sir, five nuclear tests have been carried out on 11th & 13th May, 1998 in Defence Field Ranges of Pokharan. I congratulate the scientists and engineers from Corps. of Engineers of Army and Defence Personnel who have contributed for success of these tests.

I have visited the adjoining villages which were affected due to nuclear tests. I met the villagers of Khetolai, Chacha and Dhollyan. I have gone through the damages caused to their houses, reservoirs, cattle and the public in general. A number of Pucca houses have been badly damaged. The assessment was carried out by non-technical persons. The compensation offered is negligible and most inadequate.

There are some underground reservoirs to store water which have developed cracks and have been damaged beyond repairs. The private land owners of the area are not permitted to go to their fields adjoining Field Fire Ranges. The local people are very apprehensive and fearful about the fallout of nuclear blasts. Some of the people are complaining about eye burning and reduction in cow milk.

I request the Government of India to take the following action to alleviate their problems :

- (a) Adequate safety measures should be taken by detailing expert teams to monitor the fallout of nuclear blasts.

The hon. Prime Minister is not here. I have been there. But I went with him also.

MR. SPEAKER : Please read whatever is there in the text only.

*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : No, this will not go on record. Please understand the procedure. This is a matter under Rule 377.

*(Interruptions)\**

COL. SONA RAM CHOUDHARY : (b) The hon. Prime Minister should give special financial package to the people of Pokharan of Jaisalmer district for construction of civil and veterinary hospitals and water supply channel from Indira Gandhi Canal to Pokharan region.

**(vi) Need to redress the grievances of Extra Departmental Agents who participated in the strike during 23—29 October, 1996**

SHRI S. AJAYA KUMAR (Ottapalam) : Nearly three lakhs of extra departmental employees are working in the Postal Department. Most of them had participated in the strike of the period from 23rd October, 1996 to 29th October, 1996 demanding the removal of the eligibility ceiling on bonus to Central Government employees. The Central Cabinet has taken a positive decision on their demand and the demand was conceded. Further, the Central Cabinet again took a decision to make payment of the wages for the strike period by granting eligible leave to participants. The ED agents are not entitled for any kind of leave. If leave is granted to them the allowance for the leave period will be deducted from their monthly wages and paid to the substitutes. Even though, the Government of India has decided to condone the strike period but the benefit of the decision has not been implemented to the poor paid ED agents only on the plea that they are not entitled to wages during the leave period.

The decision of the Postal authorities is in contravention to the spirit of the Cabinet decision. So the postal workers of Kerala went on an agitational programme from 2.12 1996. The then Hon. Minister for Communications intervened on the issue and promised the Union (NFPE) representative that action would be taken for payment of strike period of wages to ED agents also. But it seems no improvement on this issue is there.

I request the Government to look into it.

**(vii) Need to set up Power House for uninterrupted supply of Power at Mashrakh or Baniapur in Maharajganj Parliamentary Constituency in Bihar**

*[Translation]*

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajganj) : The Saran division located in the Maharajganj constituency

in Bihar gets very little power supply. Maharajganj Parliamentary Constituency is located between Saran and Siwan district under Saran Division and the three district headquarters of their division have power houses but Maharajganj has to depend on neighbouring district headquarters for the supply of power as it is not a district headquarter. As a result, the condition of power supply is very poor in this parliamentary constituency having population of 20 lakh. Power is supplied only for 4-5 hours in this whole constituency and that too in instalments. Due to this, not only the people of this area have to face inconveniences but financial condition of the residents engaged in agriculture is also affected because the local villagers have to face several problems like irrigation of fields in the absence of power supply.

Therefore, I urge upon the Government to set up a power sub-station at Mashrakh or Baniapur as they are located at the central point of this constituency so that normal power supply could be made available for Maharajganj region and the people of this area get a relief from the present situation of power crisis.

**(viii) Need to Waive the Outstanding Interest of Rs. 663 crore of the S.C.C.L. to strengthen its financial position**

*[English]*

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU (Srikakulam) : The Government of India has been requested to waive the outstanding interest of Rs. 663 crore of the S.C.C.L. accrued during the 8th Plan, for which a moratorium was granted by the Government of India, payable in the 9th Plan. This is necessary to restore the financial health of the Company and to sustain its growth profile to meet the demand for coal in Southern India to a large extent.

Therefore, I request through you, to waive the outstanding interest of Rs. 663 crore accrued during the 8th Plan in order to strengthen the financial position of the S.C.C.L.

**(ix) Need to clear the Proposal of the State Government of Maharashtra for providing Civic Amenities to the Hutment Dwellers on the Lands of the Airport Authority of India, Mumbai, Maharashtra**

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR (Mumbai North-West) : There are around 65,000 hutments on the land belonging to the Airport Authority of India in Mumbai for many years. Since they have not been provided with civic amenities such as light, lavatories, water, cement passages etc., life of the hutment dwellers has become very miserable.

This matter was discussed with the concerned authorities on a number of occasions but it has not been resolved so far. The Government of Maharashtra is willing to include them in the housing scheme which

\* Not Recorded